

European Jewry on the eve of destruction

The distinguished historian Bernard Wasserstein, son of a Jewish professor of classics who fled from Germany to Britain and himself now a professor at the University of Chicago, made his name with his early study *Britain and the Jews of Europe, 1939-1945*, followed by a steady stream of publications on Jewish subjects and the Middle East. His latest book, *On the Eve: The Jews of Europe Before the Second World War* (London: Profile Books, 2012), is a sweeping and often magisterial historical overview of the Jews of Europe between the First and Second World Wars, ranging across the entire continent, from France to Poland, Lithuania and the Soviet Union, from Holland to Slovakia, Romania and Greece.

Historians of the Jews of Europe in the twentieth century have understandably concentrated on the Holocaust and its origins, on the wartime period 1939-45, or on German policy between 1933 and 1945, treating the preceding years as a mere curtain-raiser. But that, as Wasserstein ably shows, is to ignore the period when the culture (or, given the diversity of the Jewish national communities, cultures) of the Jews of Europe had reached a high point. To focus on the Jews under Nazism also presses them into the role of passive victims, overlooking the earlier period when they were active agents, able to take independent initiatives and to seek to determine outcomes, even if by 1939 those initiatives had largely come to nought.

Wasserstein's substantial study, weighing in at 552 pages, is packed with information about any number of important aspects of Europe's Jewish communities in the interwar years. It ranges with sovereign ease from Slovakian Hasidic rabbis to diamond workers in Amsterdam, from the rarefied scholarship of the Frankfurt School to Yiddish popular theatre in Poland, from Communist publications in Paris (in the Marais district, known by Jews from the East as the Pletzl) to the works of Franz Kafka. It encompasses the stevedores of Salonica, the textile and garment workers

of Warsaw, the scientists and managerial *apparatchiks* of Moscow and Minsk, the traders and *shnorrers* of the eastern *shtetlakh* (there is a memorable chapter entitled 'Luftmenshn'), the *yeshiva bochers* of Vilna, and the cultured middle-class Jews of Berlin and Vienna.

All this is backed up by a wealth of 'hard' statistical information about occupations, incomes, mortality rates, intermarriage and emigration, by a sensitive and sophisticated approach to



A Jewish family from Rabka, Poland

literary and other texts, and by an analytical intelligence that illuminates the many and varied features of Jewish life, especially in the collective sphere of its communal institutions. For Wasserstein is essentially a bottom-up historian, gathering a mass of detailed information and distilling from it a compelling picture of his subject, bringing European Jewry vividly to life while at the same time supplying an acute analysis of its development and its reactions to the conditions it encountered.

Eschewing complex conceptual or methodological models, Wasserstein does not proceed from any preconceived theoretical viewpoint, though the main outlines of his argument are readily discernible. He sees the ten million Jews of Europe changing from a vibrant,

confident people that in 1919 was gaining rights unprecedented in its historical experience to one that was in 1939 'close to terminal collapse'. That was, he argues, neither due only to the rise of Nazism and other anti-Semitic regimes that threatened the very existence of the Jews of Europe, nor to the tightening economic vice that was squeezing the life from the material foundations of their communities.

Wasserstein sees those communities as threatened also by demographic developments, by emigration (from the eastern European heartlands to the USA), by intermarriage and conversion, by the disruption of traditional communities and practices, and by the very success of assimilation, which led Jews onto a one-way path to integration, so that, in face of continuing hostility, 'they embarked on a road toward collective oblivion that appeared to be the price of individual survival'. 'Appeared' is the operative word here, for by 1939 even the hope of survival was fading for communities left friendless and defenceless and at the mercy of those bent on their elimination. Even in the Soviet Union, where Jews enjoyed real equality at least in the early years, the process of 'sovietisation' meant that they were 'advancing towards disappearance' as they adapted to the Soviet model of society.

Wasserstein allocates the Jewries of Europe to four zones: the Western democracies, where they had full civic and political rights; east-central Europe, where they suffered discrimination; the special case of the Soviet Union, where religion had officially been abolished; and the Third Reich, which wished to eradicate the Jewish presence entirely. This last case allows Wasserstein to dwell poignantly on 'the toppling of German Jewry from its pedestal as the most proud, wealthy, creative and forward-looking Jewish community in Europe'. German-speaking Jewry bulks large in his tribute to the extraordinary contribution that Jews made to the culture of interwar Europe, especially its avant-garde, to

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the role of education in the mass rise of Jews from the proletariat and the petty bourgeoisie into the professional and entrepreneurial classes, and to the hunger for 'Bildung' that led to the remarkable overrepresentation of Jews in universities in Berlin or Budapest, Warsaw or Bucharest.

Wasserstein emphasises how greatly the 'social pyramid' of the Jewish communities diverged from those of the gentile populations around them. Few Jews were employed in agriculture, mining, domestic service or the public sector, the largest categories of labour almost everywhere. Instead, they were heavily engaged in commerce, often as small traders and shopkeepers, in garment manufacturing or the grain trade. They also preferred self-employment, frequently as artisans working from home. And they moved rapidly into the professions, especially in the great capital cities, almost all of which saw a significant immigration of 'metropolitanized' Jews from impoverished rural areas like the former Pale of Settlement.

Remarkably, these patterns were observable even in the Soviet Union, where private commerce was effectively eliminated. Jews were eager to integrate into Soviet society; however, they did so not as industrial workers in factories, mines or steelworks, but in white-collar positions in senior management, in the bureaucracy, the universities, the media, in the judicial system, hospitals and laboratories. It was for this reason that Jews were hit hard by Stalin's great purges of the 1930s, which were not yet openly anti-Semitic; the purges impacted on bureaucrats and intellectuals more severely than on manual workers.

Wasserstein accurately identifies 'the Christian problem', the prejudice and discrimination against Jews in supposedly Christian societies, as the source of many of the troubles affecting the Jews of Europe. Yet he does not shy away from the divisions and hatreds endemic within Jewish communities. With the steep decline of Orthodoxy and of traditional Jewish education, Wasserstein sees Judaism in retreat even in Poland, its foremost European stronghold. As the Jewish languages, Yiddish, Hebrew or Ladino, declined, European Jewry was poised in the interwar period between 'sustaining its own culture and embracing that of others'. Language, Wasserstein argues persuasively, was the matrix from which Jewish culture grew. As Jews abandoned their languages for those of

the societies around them, so the vitality of their culture diminished and their autonomous communal life threatened to wither on the vine.

Anthony Grenville

A journalist remembers

Among the relatively few refugees from Hitler to have achieved prominence as a journalist in Britain is John Izbicki, who for 18 years, from 1969, covered education for the *Daily Telegraph* with notable intelligence and flair. Now Izbicki has written a characteristically readable and entertaining autobiography: *Life Between the Lines* (London: Umbria Press, 2012, 359 pp., £12.95). Speaking as a regular reader of Izbicki's, I was surprised to learn that he was born Horst Izbicki in 1930, the son of Jewish parents from Berlin who arrived in Britain by boat on the night of 2-3 September 1939. (How he came to change his first name to John on the advice of an Oxford policeman is just one of many amusing reminiscences from an eventful life.)

Izbicki's life represents something of a triumph of talent and self-belief over the handicaps confronting the son of impoverished refugees who spoke only broken English. To his parents' pride, he graduated from Nottingham University, then became an officer in the army during his National Service. Having embarked on a career in journalism, he joined the *Daily Telegraph* in 1964, becoming its education correspondent in 1969. In the 1970s and 1980s, at least until Conrad Black took over the paper and installed Max Hastings as editor, he wrote the well informed and perceptive pieces that won him many a devoted reader as well as the confidence of successive Secretaries of State for Education, not least Margaret Thatcher.

I found Izbicki's depiction of the worlds of journalism, education and politics quite fascinating. He also gives an unusually frank account of his personal life; readers

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Views expressed in the *AJR Journal* are not necessarily those of the Association of Jewish Refugees and should not be regarded as such.

Kristallnacht 74th Anniversary Memorial Service

**Belsize Square Synagogue
Wednesday 7 November 2012
at 2 pm**

**Guest Speaker: Trudy Gold,
Executive Director, London
Jewish Cultural Centre**

Please join us for a service to commemorate the 74th anniversary of Kristallnacht at Belsize Square Synagogue on Wednesday 7 November 2012 at 2 pm.

Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg will lead the service and light refreshments will be served at its conclusion.

We are arranging free transport to and from the Synagogue with collections in Stanmore, Golders Green and at Finchley Road Station.

**Please contact Karin Pereira at
AJR Head Office on 020 8385
3070 or at karin@ajr.org.uk if you
would like to travel on the coach.**

are never allowed to forget the mark left on his family by the Holocaust, and few will remain unmoved by his account of his first wife's early death. Altogether, a memoir to be savoured.

Anthony Grenville

The Association of Jewish Refugees in Great Britain Benevolent Society

(Register No. 44 BEN)
(the 'Society')

**Notice of a Special General
Meeting
to consider the proposed
reorganisation of the Society**

Notice is hereby given that
a Special General Meeting
of the members of the Society
will be held on

Thursday 15 November 2012
at 3:00 pm

at the AJR Paul Balint Centre,
Belsize Square Synagogue,
London NW3 4HX

Members are referred to the enclosed letter from the Chairman and the formal notice setting out the proposed resolutions which members will be asked to consider and vote on.

Celebration Lunch 2012 'Showstoppers'

Some 200 AJR members enjoyed a wonderful afternoon at the Hilton Hotel in Watford, listening to 'showstoppers' from *Oliver*, *My Fair Lady*, *Fiddler on the Roof* and *The Merry Widow*. The 'showstoppers' were performed by Glenys Groves (Soprano), Andrea Hazell (Mezzo Soprano), Jonathan Fisher (Baritone) and Diana Franklin (Piano).

AJR Chairman Andrew Kaufman, welcoming guests, paid tribute to two Ludwigs: Sir Ludwig Guttmann, the founder of the Paralympics, who was an AJR Board member for over a quarter-century, and Ludwig Spiro, the AJR's President, who founded the AJR Centre in West Hampstead (now relocated to Belsize Square Synagogue) and passed away last year aged 99. Andrew took the opportunity to remind those present that 'without the generous legacies our members bequeath us, we would simply not be able to support those of our members with the greatest need.'



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**CONTEMPORARY PAINTING
AND SCULPTURE**

A VISIT TO THE ANCESTORS

It's a Saturday night in November 2009 and a group of Grodzinski cousins has met at Heathrow for a flight to Germany. We're off on a visit to the Rhineland town of Pfungstadt, some 30 miles south of Frankfurt.

Pfungstadt is the birthplace of our grandmother Bertha Jeidel (hereinafter Granny), who came to England in 1908 to marry Abi Grodzinski, one of the founders of the bakery business. She left her family behind and the purpose of our visit is to learn about their lives in Germany and those of the town's Jewish community in the decades leading up to the Second World War.

Jewish communities in Germany are funded by local councils, some of which have developed an interest in the history of their Jewish communities. Pfungstadt's archivist, Stephanie Goethals, is a particularly devoted example and she has developed a close working relationship with Joni Grodzinski, our family archivist.

Pfungstadt's Jewish community was founded in the early 1700s. At one time, Granny's father, Joseph Jeidel, was its head. The Jeidels were the largest family in the town and they are to feature in an exhibition of its Jewish community which is being put on to mark the 70th anniversary of Kristallnacht. Also, the local school is staging a play about the community from the 1860s until its dispersion in 1939.

We began with a visit to the Jewish cemetery in Alsbach, which served Pfungstadt and its satellite communities and where many of our ancestors are buried. The burial plots have been marked on a plan by Wolfgang Roth, one of Stephanie's colleagues, who helped us to identify several generations of ancestors as far back as the mid-18th century.

Many of the gravestones are of red sandstone, a softish material, but even so we were able to identify many of them. It was very moving not only to find so many graves of our relations but also to see how well they had been looked after by the local community. There had

been some vandalism recently, but it was minimal – more a few daubings on the cemetery wall than attacks on the graves themselves.

In the warm autumn sunshine, the leaves on the trees a golden yellow, we stood in awe at the grave of our great-great-great-great-grandfather Loew Jeidel, who died in 1787. The writing on his tomb was still legible. We wondered what he would think of the idea that some 200 years after his death his descendants would come to his grave. None of us could conceive that our descendants might do such a thing for

fairly small but, for us, full of family treasures: an Iron Cross won by a cousin in the Great War, a great-aunt's school report, and a letter written in 1939 on Granny's behalf by a solicitor in London seeking to arrange exit permits for her mother, a nephew and two of her sisters and brothers-in-law. She succeeded in getting them out, though the last left in August that year, only a few days before war broke out and only after some scares.

Moritz Mainzer, one of her brothers-in-law, was a successful timber merchant and a leader of the community. During Kristallnacht he was arrested, beaten up and sent to Buchenwald, in those days fortunately only a concentration camp. After some months he was freed. He returned to Pfungstadt but, when he tried to resume business, he was offered two choices: you go to London or you return to Buchenwald!

Another exhibit was a framed regimental roll call of the soldiers from Pfungstadt who had fought in the Great War. Above each name was a photo; those of the Jewish soldiers had been removed.

We then moved to the partly restored synagogue for the play. The building is down a narrow alleyway. Before the war it was flanked by a paint factory and a barn, whose proprietors, fearful for their properties, saved it from being set on fire. Today, the ceiling has been restored (aquamarine studded with gold stars), as has the *mikvah*, where Granny must have gone the night before her wedding!

The actors were sixth-formers from the local high school and, though they spoke in German, it was pretty easy to follow the story. For us, it was a peculiar and emotional experience. Here were 17-year-olds portraying in their thirties and forties great-aunts and -uncles and other relatives whom we had known in London in their sixties and seventies. The play also brought to life episodes we were aware of in theory but had never been told about: as with so many Holocaust survivors, our relatives never spoke to us about their lives in Germany

continued opposite ➔



The schoolchildren who staged the play about Pfungstadt's Jewish community from the 1860s until 1939

us! We held an *Azkarah* memorial service and said *Kaddish* at the grave of Joseph Jeidel, our great-grandfather.

There was an interesting outcome to our visit to the cemetery. Wolfgang had invited a journalist, whose report duly appeared in a local paper a few days later. Immediately he was contacted by a 94-year-old lady who said she had played with my aunts Felice and Dolly when they were children in the 1920s and had fond memories of them. When we told Felice about this (she has been living in Jerusalem since 1935) she retorted somewhat acerbically that rather than being friendly, Lieselotte used to run after them in the street, calling them names.

Before moving to Pfungstadt, the Jeidels had lived for about 150 years in Eschollbrücken, a sort of twin town, whose mayor had invited us to lunch in the town hall. The mayor made a speech, we responded with one in German and then had a walk around the town – seeing a pair of houses bought by our great-great-grandfather Lazarus Jeidel in the mid-1800s.

The exhibition in Pfungstadt was

Theo's Bar Mitzvah

September 7 1940. My brother Theo's Bar Mitzvah. The tiny *shul* in Coventry was fairly full as three boys were celebrating their Bar Mitzvahs. Luckily the other two boys had had regular lessons so were not too bad at reciting their *Brachot*. Theo stumbled a bit here and there – he was definitely not a regular *shul*-goer. In fact, it had been quite difficult for him to get there at all as we were living with a non-Jewish family who weren't really *au fait* with Jewish customs or sympathetic to them. However, they too came along, Uncle wearing a sports cap and Auntie in a hat she'd been advised to wear for the synagogue, with Theo's sisters, Bertha (later Leverton, founder of the Kindertransport Reunion) and I, sitting in the small Ladies' Gallery, suffering with every mistake Theo made.

Eventually the service ended and the congregation trooped into the *shul* hall, where a modest reception had been prepared by the parents of the other Bar Mitzvah boys. The rabbi had given Theo a small *tallit* in the forlorn hope that it might be worn now and then. I don't remember any *tefillin* – in fact, no present from anyone – and we returned to our foster home to our ordinary life in a non-Jewish household.

Our parents were not at the Bar Mitzvah, of course: we hadn't heard from them, except for a few Red Cross messages every few months, since the War had started. They had sent Bertha, Theo and me on the Kindertransports, the two older children in January 1939 and me

in July, six weeks before war broke out. Bertha and Theo had, after a few weeks at Dovercourt reception camp, been literally sent to Coventry – Bertha as a housemaid and Theo as a playmate to a milkman's (reluctant) son. I couldn't wait to join them – as everyone knew, England was the home of kings and queens, princesses and various other aristocrats and a way of life I hoped we would soon join. (How marvellous a nine-year-old's imagination can be)

How we missed our parents that day, more than on any other! We had come from a traditional Jewish home and the change of life in our new environment was quite a shock. Nevertheless, children are pretty adaptable and we soon learned to fit in.

However, what we did not know – and, had we had any inkling we would have been in seventh heaven – was that on that very *Shabbat* morning my parents did celebrate my brother's Bar Mitzvah. A year into the war, and with no escape on the horizon, my father decided to risk an illegal emigration to Yugoslavia, where there were still possibilities of getting across the border from Austria. At that time, if one left Germany (without any money, of course) it was still possible to be smuggled via Graz to Zagreb with the help of a people-smuggler named Josef Schleich. (All other routes were out by that time – no boats to Palestine, North or South America, Shanghai, Japan or most other longed-for destinations.) So they crept out of Munich on a Sunday morning, made their way to Graz by train

and, after several very difficult days at the smuggler's house, they were taken together with other refugees to the border near Yugoslavia. There peasants who knew the landscape inside out were recruited to guide the refugees over the mountains. If a border patrol approached, the peasants fled and left the refugees to fend for themselves. Needless to say, it was a horrendous journey, but my parents managed it and arrived in Zagreb a few days later. There they were looked after by the Yugoslav-Jewish community, who had thousands of refugees to care for.

At that time, Yugoslavia was still neutral and the Jews there did their utmost to care for the influx of young orphans from Poland and Austria as well as any adults who needed help. It wasn't until months later that the Germans invaded and many Yugoslav Jews met the fate of their fellow-Jews elsewhere.

But on the morning of September 7 1940 my father and mother went to the local synagogue, where he was honoured as the father of a Bar Mitzvah, as well as saying the prayer for having been delivered from danger (for the time being anyway). And so it was that my brother did get a present – the best present anyone could have wanted for his Bar Mitzvah – except of course he was unaware of it at the time!

It took another three and a half years before we were reunited as a family in England, during which our parents had wandered through Yugoslavia, Italy, Spain and Portugal. But that's another story

Inge Sadan

A visit to the ancestors cont. from p4

before they came to live in England.

After the play we chatted to the actors, who were curious to learn the fate of those they had portrayed. Warned that we were to be in the audience, they had been very nervous, expecting us to be very critical, and they were very grateful we had enjoyed it so much. In fact, the play turned out to be the highlight of our visit and to witness it in the building where Granny had *davened* (or at least gone to) every *Shabbat* and *yom tov* for 20 years somehow made it even more poignant.

It was getting late when we left the *shul* and it was in the gathering dusk that we visited some of the sites of the town: the Franco-Prussian War memorial, featuring a number of Jeidels, one of whom supplied food and forage to the army, the Mainzer timber yard, still in its pre-war format, and the Jeidel ironmongery store and house, which, though rebuilt, was still recognisable from a 1908 painting given to Granny as

a wedding present by her cousin Nathan Jeidel (and which now hangs alongside other family photographs in our 'rogues' gallery').

Nathan provides another, if sad, footnote. After a spell in art school in London, he went to Palestine in 1939, leaving his wife behind while he set things up. The War intervened and she was stuck in England. She finally made it to Tel Aviv in 1945 but he died on the day she arrived.

The following day we took a tour of Jewish Frankfurt, the most moving part of which was a visit to the medieval cemetery in Battonstrasse, which contains nearly 600 years of graves of the community between the 13th and 19th centuries (though few today are visible). The surrounding wall is memorialised with the names of those Frankfurt Jews who died in the city or were deported during the War. Each name is engraved in black metal on a matchbox-sized rectangle of concrete,

embedded symmetrically, into the wall. There are thousands and thousands of boxes, stretching along the wall as far as the eye can see. In the context of six million, tens of thousands doesn't seem so many but, when you actually see the individual names, even if reduced to only a few square inches of concrete, the immensity of the tragedy is brought home forcefully. And a few of the boxes bore the name Jeidel, showing that not all of the family had been as fortunate as Granny's immediate relations.

Our visit helped us to put flesh on long-dead ancestors. We understand more of their lives in pre-war Germany, of the events that beleaguered them during the 1930s, and the sometimes heroic efforts of their non-Jewish neighbours to protect them from the worst of the atrocities. Sometimes hindsight can be illuminating and, in this case, knowing the fate of our relatives made their stories come alive. It was a worthwhile visit.

Emmanuel Grodzinski



Letters to the Editor

The Editor reserves the right to shorten correspondence submitted for publication

AN EXTRAORDINARY MAN: WILFRID ISRAEL AND THE KINDERTRANSPORTS

Sir – Whilst it is clearly Ruth Barnett's prerogative to disagree with me over the role Wilfrid Israel played in the formation of the Kindertransport (September, Letters), she has wilfully misinterpreted my review (in your August issue) of Yonatan Nir's DVD about this extraordinary man.

I was full of admiration for Wilfrid Israel's stance and his frantic activities on behalf of Berlin Jews before the war, but I made the point that he was by no means the only one who initiated the Kindertransport movement. In this respect, Nir's short DVD is indeed misleading. Nir himself has acknowledged this and is therefore making a new and longer film about the man in which his activities will be shown in context.

Since writing my review, I have read Naomi Shepherd's outstanding biography *Wilfrid Israel: German Jewry's Secret Ambassador* (Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1984), on which Nir's DVD was based. I have also had the pleasure of meeting Naomi Shepherd. She is in complete agreement with my assessment and in her book, which reads like a detective story and which I very strongly recommend to the Journal's readers, she considers Israel's astonishing contribution to the rescue of German Jews in a much wider context.

Leslie Baruch Brent, London N19

LUDWIG GUTTMANN: CALL FOR MEMORIAL PLAQUE

Sir – With regard to your September article on Sir Ludwig Guttman, if there is not yet a suitable memorial plaque on the Wycombe house in which the gentleman lived, the deficiency should be remedied.

Recent publicity suggests that his contribution to British society is widely appreciated.

I pay my council tax to Wycombe District Council but a prompt from the AJR is likely to be more effective.

Alan S. Kaye, Marlow, Bucks

LEGACY OF GRETA BURKILL

Sir – Susanne Medas's article about Greta Burkill in your August issue brought back many happy memories.

In December 1944 I spent a few

weeks on sick leave with my parents in Cambridge. The local doctor had decided that I should get out of the BBC Monitoring Service, which involved shift work. My parents had moved to Cambridge in 1941 when my brother had obtained a Trinity College scholarship in mathematics. They were able to rent a Peterhouse property in Belvoir Terrace as a result of support from Dr Charles Burkill. Greta told me two jobs would shortly be available in Cambridge. One was as secretary to herself for the Cambridge Refugee Committee because her secretary, Ella Margolies, had married an American and was shortly leaving for the USA.

The other was as assistant to Dr Josef Skemp, the administrator for the Society for the Protection of Science and Learning (SPSL). It was known that he wished to return to academic work as soon as the war was over: his position was classified as war work and had been his reason for taking it as he was a conscientious objector. I opted for the SPSL job as it sounded more interesting and, after a number of interviews with members of the committee, I was accepted.

The SPSL was founded by Sir William Beveridge in 1933. He happened to be lecturing in Vienna when the first German-Jewish professors arrived there following their dismissal from German universities. The idea was to act as a kind of employment exchange for them to find jobs abroad. My job brought me in to frequent contact with Greta Burkill. They moved to Peterhouse when Charles Burkill became Master but, to the best of my knowledge, kept the Chaucer Road property. I kept in touch with Charles Burkill after Greta's death until he died.

My brother, Fritz Ursell, never needed Greta's help but was one of those she was very proud of as he became Professor of Mathematics at Manchester in 1961.

Ilse J. Eton (née Ursell), London NW11

Sir – The article about Greta Burkill in your August issue prompts me to pay tribute to a colleague of hers on the Cambridge Refugee Committee: Mrs Sybil Hutton. She and her husband, Professor Robert Hutton, Fellow of Peterhouse College, opened their house (also in Chaucer Road) to several refugees and treated them as part of

their family. My sister was employed as housekeeper, another young woman from Berlin as cook, and three or four younger refugees (me included) were housed and fed without any financial contribution – one or two were still of school age and were sent to school; a 16-year-old boy and I were 'building trainees'.

We had our meals with the couple and shared their living room with them in the evenings. They sacrificed their privacy completely and gave us a real home.

Mrs Hutton was the daughter of Sir George Schuster, a physicist who had emigrated from Germany to Britain after the failure of the 1848 revolution, and her husband had been Sir George's assistant. So sympathy with refugees had started early in both their lives.

An afterthought concerning Mrs Burkill: a sister of hers was an officer in the ATS during the war (Junior Commander Brown) and served in the same intelligence unit (CSDIC) as my wife and myself. We referred to her as 'Bräunchen'!

Fritz Lustig, London N10

Sir – I refer to the letter from Susan Medas. Among other people, she mentions 'a Miss Ney', with whom she worked in the Children's Section at Bloomsbury House.

I first got to know Elisabeth Ney when she took over my job in the Nottinghamshire Children's Department when I was living there in about 1950-52 and we became friends from that time on.

As far as I am aware, she had worked at Bloomsbury House for about two years and was then able to go to the London School of Economics to take a new course to train as Children's Officer. I believe she stayed in Nottinghamshire for some years, making friends with her mainly English colleagues, with whom she kept in contact for many years after she had left. Following her job in Nottinghamshire she had some local authority jobs in the South East as she wanted to come back to London, where she had friends and family. She had worked for some other local authorities, finishing in East Ham until she retired.

Elisabeth was always a very determined lady and struggled on in her own home, although for several years towards the end of her life she was physically handicapped and partially sighted. Her main interests were in classical music, but also in the arts as well as her little garden, where she lived until the end. She was a much loved person and was missed by many friends. She never married but always took a great interest in her friends' children. She died in 2005 at the age of 94.

Eva Frean, London N3

Sir – The contents of Susanne Medas's letter surprised me greatly.

My late husband came to this country on a Kindertransport in late August

1939 at the age of 13 and was placed in a boys' hostel in Rugby. There was no contact from a Jewish Refugee Committee. He and his sister were rescued from Liverpool Street Station by a group of Christadelphians. At no time was he contacted by any Jewish organisation and, when he was in need of an overcoat for the winter, he had to appeal to a distant connection of his father's family, while writing to congratulate that gentleman on the arrival on a grandson. He started work at the age of 15; he was never in receipt of any 'pocket money' or given the option of further education. He put himself through evening classes and it was a cause of real regret to him that he was unable to pursue the profession of his father, uncles and grandfather, who were all practising GPs in their home cities of Bayreuth and Plzen.

My mother came on a domestic visa in January 1939, with me in tow; she spent each day off travelling from deepest Surrey to Bloomsbury House in her efforts to get a visa for my father. I vividly recall her despair after each visit when she had been palmed off with promises that never materialised. In the end, my father was rescued, arriving in May 1939 – not by any Jewish agency but by the strenuous efforts of a Society of Friends lady, who lived near where my mother was employed. We were, all three, interned on the Isle of Man, my father in Ramsey, my mother and I in Port Erin. My father enlisted in the army and, on that basis, my mother and I were released. No Jewish agency came to our aid then or at any time thereafter.

At no time did any Jewish organisation endeavour to contact – let alone help – us. It was only on my father's death that the Liberal Synagogue helped by arranging his funeral. And, years later, my husband and I decided to marry in a United Synagogue. At some point, my mother joined the AJR and, when she died, we continued with the membership. When a Reform community was set up in our area, around 1960, we decided to integrate into a full Jewish life, which we maintained. No Jewish agency helped us to integrate – we did that all on our own.

I feel enormous gratitude to this country for saving my life, for allowing me a good education, for instilling in me the idea of fair play and for making me feel very English. *Edith Holden, London N14*

PORTRAIT OF HAUPTMANN

Sir – I found Anthony Grenville's essay about Gerhart Hauptmann (July) fascinating since he figures in my life in odd ways.

When I was around Bar Mitzvah age, I was rummaging in my family storage room (in Buffalo, NY) and found a huge, framed etching of a stern-looking man. I took it downstairs to ask my father who it was. It was a portrait of Hauptmann

by Hermann Struck (1876-1944) – my father had put it away because, he said, there was something about the man being a Nazi. I asked whether I could have it, I then hung it in my room, and it has followed me through university days and various places where I've lived, and it's now in my study in New York. (As I'm an art historian, I can say that it's a stunning etching and a graphic *tour de force* because of its size and wonderful *chiaroscuro* effects.) It's dated 1904 and, as with many Struck etchings, has a small *Magen David* at the bottom (left) corner – which seems ironic in this instance. It's among a large number of Struck portraits of notables done in 1903-14.

My father grew up in the same Berlin building where the Strucks lived (33 Brückenallee) and was sort of their adopted son – they had no children. Struck was really the one who made my father into a *verbrennte* Zionist (certainly that wasn't my grandparents' worldview) and our family stayed in touch with his widow, Molly, even after her husband died (in Haifa in 1944), when we had already emigrated to the USA (1937-38). I still have many of those letters.

Struck seems to have kept his Berlin flat after he moved to Palestine in 1922. He returned to Berlin with some regularity (first in 1923) and he happened to be in Berlin when my grandfather died in 1926 – he created a wonderful pencil image of my grandfather on his deathbed. I still treasure that!

When I was at university (Harvard) in the mid-1950s I took a course on revolutions with Professor Crane Brinton, who was among the reigning experts on such things at the time. My course paper was about Hauptmann's *Die Weber* – my professor was impressed I'd even heard of Hauptmann – comparing it with Heine's poem that opens 'Im düstern Auge keine Träne'. It was considered a very esoteric subject but, since my mother was from Beuthen O.S., she had told me about the Silesian weavers' revolt and Heine's poem about it. (I think I received a good grade.)

All this came back to me when I read your wonderful essay, for which, thanks!

Tom Freudenheim, New York

NO-NO DRINK

Sir – May I correct a misunderstanding which appeared in your September issue?

Rudi Leavor would have been perfectly safe to enjoy the cranberry juice at his lunch with the Queen. The 'no-no drink' with some statins (not all) is grapefruit juice. Nevertheless, he was right to point out that the risk of serving cranberry juice on an occasion such as this is strongly contraindicated for people taking warfarin. I trust this will avoid any confusion among those who read this article and I hope he enjoyed his lunch.

Fritz Starer, Watford

LIFE OF AN ISRAELI IMMIGRANT FROM BRITAIN

Sir – My younger brother is a Holocaust survivor from France, our parents having fled Vienna just before the Second World War. He emigrated to Israel over 40 years ago following his graduation from Manchester University to escape the undercurrent of anti-Semitism he experienced in the UK in the 1960s.

We correspond regularly and I anticipate his letters and emails with enthusiasm as they are always interesting and often quite hilarious.

This is why I often make a bee-line to the back page of your excellent journal to enjoy the articles of Dorothea Shefer-Vanson. Her articles can be serious but usually are humorous and light-hearted, a reflection of the life of an Israeli immigrant from Britain. They make a pleasant contrast to the rest of the Journal, which can be sad and even depressing at times.

Perhaps my brother is not aware of the self-immolations, alcohol abuse, paedophilia etc in Israel – or perhaps he doesn't want to burden me with such depressing topics, which can be readily accessed in *The Guardian*, the internet, the BBC and much of the British media.

What I do know, however, is that if I were ever to receive a letter from Kiryat Shemona signed Ray Lewis (your September issue), I would know exactly what to do with it. Bin it.

Marcel Ladenheim, Surbiton, Surrey

SMUG CHUTZPAH

Sir – Like Hans Eirew (Letters, August), I was in Vienna in March 1938. The sounds of the Wehrmacht marching and the Luftwaffe overhead were drowned out by cheering people. I didn't understand until much later why the adults gathered to celebrate my 9th birthday were silent and gloomy and didn't join the jubilant mood of the crowds in the streets below our flat. The enthusiasm and speed with which the Austrians then went about first excluding, then persecuting, Jews surpassed that of their German compatriots. The smug *chutzpah* of the Austrians, who claimed in 1945 (and since) that they were victims of a 'German occupation' is laughable. Tom Tait (Letters, July) is quite right.

But this does not make me bitter or prevent me from enjoying 21st-century Austria and 21st-century Austrians!

John (formerly Hans) Farago Deal, Kent

NOT MY HEIMAT

Sir – What an odd letter from Eric Bourne. Why on earth should I regard the country of my birth as my 'Heimat'? The Austrians chucked my family out and, in any case, I was only three years old when we left Vienna.

I think Eric Bourne is looking for excuses for his many visits to Berlin. You don't

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ART NOTES

Gloria Tessler

Shakespeare lovers should visit the **British Museum's** excellent exhibition **Shakespeare: Staging the World** (until 25 November), launched in time for the 2012 Olympics. It offers some rousing videos and voice-overs by the Royal Shakespeare Company, such as Sir Ian McKellan's dazzling Prospero soliloquy, Sir Antony Sher's poignant Shylock 'Hath not a Jew eyes?' appeal, and Harriet Walter's emotive rendition of Cleopatra's suicide speech.

Yet the author of these words did not write just for the refined literary palette



The Lyte Jewel, 1610 © The Trustees of the British Museum

but for bear-baiters, prostitutes and bawdy pub-goers – the typical clientele of his day. In Elizabethan England, purpose-built theatres were created to house the burgeoning talent of play-writing. Shakespeare was the house dramatist of the Chamberlain's/King's Men at the Globe.

His plays resonate with political controversies of the time. Objects excavated by the Museum in the local Globe and Rose Theatre areas tell the tale. Among the amulets and talismans is the gold Ides of March coin commissioned by Brutus shortly after the assassination of Julius Caesar in 44 BC. This time of duelling and battle is conveyed by the rapiers and daggers excavated in Bankside. A dagger fished out of the Thames records the gang violence of *Romeo and Juliet*, and a

Spanish rapier resembles the one Othello used to kill himself. The Lyte Jewel, a diamond-studded locket portraying James I by miniaturist James Hilliard, indicates the King's obsession with lineage and succession. This and his fear of witchcraft are said to have inspired *Hamlet* and *Macbeth*.

Though he made his name in London, the Bard remained true to his regional roots. But his pastoral nostalgia did not idealise the plight of the tenant farmer, as we learn from the history plays.

The many paintings on display provide a social commentary on the times. Some are mythological, some are allegorical and some suggest contemporary events on which the plays are based. For instance, the portrait of the Moroccan Ambassador to Queen Elizabeth I is a possible source of *Othello*. A flower painting bears a quote from Ophelia in *Hamlet* Act IV: 'There's rosemary, that's for remembrance.' Another painting, attributed to Lucas de Heere, shows Henry VIII with his daughters Mary Tudor and Elizabeth I, while another idealises Elizabeth as the Virgin Queen with Sir Francis Walsingham, her over-assiduous Protestant spymaster. There is a famous painting of the metaphysical poet John Donne as a melancholy lover, reflected in *As You Like It*.

Listen to Anthony Sher's Shylock appeal for common humanity across the ethnic divide while studying a scroll of the Book of Esther dated 1573, possibly commissioned by a Jewish painter for a Christian printer. A Sabbath lamp dates from before the expulsion of the Jews from England in 1290. I was surprised to learn that Henry VIII used Jewish law to justify his divorce from Catherine of Aragon. The Reformation promised Hebrew study as one of the two ancient biblical languages. Also, a medallion inscribed with the names of Elijah de Lattes and his mother Rica dated 1552 was a tribute to Jewish lineage in Christian society. Less happy was the story of Rodrigo Lopez, the Queen's doctor executed in 1594 over an alleged plot to poison her.

The Venetian ghettos from which Shakespeare drew Shylock are contrasted with Shakespeare's London, whose tiny, illegal communities of Jewish *conversos* or *marranos*, like Protestant refugees gathering in the suburbs, made London a vibrant place for trade and cultural exchange. There is a rare copy of Shakespeare's 1st Folio, published seven years after his death, featuring one of the most famous portrait engravings of the Bard by Martin Droeshout.

REVIEWS

Perfection personified

I'LL NEVER SEE YOU AGAIN: MEMORIES FOR THE FUTURE

by Margot Barnard

Pomegranate Books 2012, 219 pp.,
translated from the German by Marion
Koebner, ISBN 978-1-84289-017-2

Most of us Continental Britons fled to Britain straight from the countries in which we were no longer welcome. Not so the author. Margot Barnard, née Kober, was born in December 1919 in Beuel, a small town near Bonn. In this book we follow her through her eventful life from her carefree childhood to the present day.

In the early 1930s Margot finds Zionism and becomes an enthusiastic member of the left-wing youth organisation Hashomer Hatzair. Despite her parents' misgivings, she emigrates to Palestine. It is at Bonn railway station in the late summer of 1936 that her mother tearfully begs her not to leave and says, prophetically, what is to give this book its title: 'I'll never see you again.'

After two years as a kibbutz, Margot stays with relatives in Haifa and Jerusalem, earning her living as a maid, a waitress and a baker and helping to run a hotel. In Jerusalem she meets Ted, a British soldier of working-class origin, whom she is to marry while serving as a WAAF.

While still in Palestine she receives heart-rending letters from her parents asking for help in obtaining a visa and to this day the feeling of guilt for having failed them is with her.

In 1945 Margot and Ted return to England, where the reception she gets from his family is unexpectedly but distinctly frosty. He decides, with Margot's full approval, to stay in the army. She shares with us her life as an army wife, with two young children, with postings to Gibraltar, Nigeria and Germany.

In 1955, before Ted's posting to Hannover, a letter from a surviving uncle who had returned to Hamburg from Palestine prompts Margot to visit her home town after an absence of almost 20 years. She welcomes the chance to face and come to terms with her past.

Tragedy strikes when Ted, still in his forties, does not survive open-heart surgery. She rises admirably to the challenges of early widowhood and single parenthood and eventually experiences the joys of being a grandmother. But in 2005 a visit by one of her grandsons triggers a trauma which reminds her that she has never fully come to terms with her uprooting and the loss of her parents.

The author now lives in London and spends much of her time speaking in schools in Germany and England, trying to spread knowledge of the horrors of the past and, at the same time, promote reconciliation.

I tried to read the original German version – *Ich sehe Dich nie wieder! Erinnerungen für die Zukunft* (Bouvier 2008) – but have to confess I didn't get very far. Its verbosity defeated me. The translator has obviously done a lot of cutting and editing and produced an entirely readable and often moving story. However, while I enjoyed much of the book, I feel it would have greatly benefited from even further and more ruthless cuts. For example, do we really need to know every detail of her house, from her negotiations with the estate agent to the description of every lodger and neighbour? Personally, I think such trivia have no place in what is essentially a story of survival.

The author comes through as an immensely courageous, competent and adaptable woman: she does well at any job she undertakes; is unfazed by any situation however tricky; excels at marriage and motherhood; and is a polyglot. In fact, she is perfection personified. While I admire and even envy such perfection, I also find it somewhat daunting.

Nevertheless, I would recommend this book. It's a good read.

Edith Argy

Memoir of a Dresden survivor

THE SONG IS OVER: SURVIVAL OF A JEWISH GIRL IN DRESDEN

by Henny Brenner

University of Alabama Press, 2010, distributed in Europe by Eurospan Ltd, paperback 83 pp., £11.48 including p&p from www.eurospanbookstore.com, ISBN 97808117355968

This book, a translation from *Das Lied ist aus'. Ein jüdisches Schicksal in Dresden* (Pendo, 2001), describes the experiences of a half-Jewish girl (mother Jewish, father Christian) born and educated in Dresden. She was brought up in the Jewish faith and therefore treated by the Nazis as a Jewess.

Henny Brenner relates her childhood under the Nazis in considerable detail, and the first part of the book is therefore of limited interest to ex-refugees who (like her) did not leave Germany before 1939. However, the remainder is more interesting.

Her father owned a cinema, which – as he refused to get divorced from his Jewish wife – he was forced to sell, thus causing great financial hardship to the family.

In 1941, aged 16-17, Henny had to start

doing forced labour in a factory belonging to the Zeiss Ikon company, joining the so-called Jewish section there – about 300 people. From 1942 onwards Jews living less than 7 km from their place of work were not allowed to use the tram and, a little later, they had to hand in their bicycles. She therefore had to walk the almost 7 km from her home to arrive at the factory at 6 am, which meant getting up 2 hours earlier.

In 1943 she was transferred to a carton factory. Her abiding memory of that period is the all-pervading fear of being selected for deportation as there was no discernible reason for the daily choice of some Jews rather than others.

On 13 February 1945 the author's family received a letter instructing them to report the next morning for a 'work assignment outside Dresden' – they knew this meant deportation to a concentration camp. They decided not to follow that instruction but to go into hiding, fully aware this too would be highly risky. Her father remarked, half-jokingly, 'All that can save us is a massive attack on Dresden.'

The night shift at the carton factory on 13 February had been cancelled. When the air raid sirens sounded that night, the local warden came to their door and, although officially Jews were not allowed in air raid shelters, told them to come down to the shelter. Had Henny been working in the factory that night, she would have been buried in the debris of the building and not survived. After the raid, she and her family found temporary refuge with an acquaintance in an undamaged suburb. Even after the terrible destruction of the city the Nazi authorities were still looking for surviving Jews to deport.

The family had hoped to be 'liberated' by the advancing Russians, but were bitterly disappointed. The Red Army was not interested in the fact that they had been persecuted as Jews – only 'fighters against fascism' (i.e. Communists) were given preferential treatment as far as food rations, living quarters and employment were concerned.

In 1947 there were only 135 members of the Jewish community left in Dresden – many of them not even from the city but 'Displaced Persons' from Eastern Europe who had remained in Germany. In 1950 a new synagogue was dedicated.

It was not long before the Communist authorities began arresting Jews in leading government positions. The family began making preparations to escape to the West and eventually succeeded in getting to West Berlin, where the author's parents settled.

In 1953 Henny met a young man who was of Polish origin and had survived five years in ghettos and concentration camps – he was now a 'Displaced Person' living

in Bavaria. They fell in love and married in June that year. Their first child was born ten months later and, although the author and her family were now living in Bavaria and her parents remained in Berlin, they visited each other frequently. After her father's death in 1956 her mother eventually moved in with the author's family and died there a few years later. As Henny says: 'Religion, which had not separated my parents in life, divorced them in death. After they had fought together, suffered together, and had sustained each other morally ... they found eternal peace in the same city, but in different cemeteries' – her mother in the Jewish one, her father in the Christian one.

In 1981 the author went back to the city of her birth for the first time – 'nothing helped to resurrect any positive memories from my childhood' – and she didn't at that stage intend to return again. However, after the collapse of Communist-dominated East Germany, she changed her mind and is now visiting Dresden regularly in order to lecture in schools about her experiences in Nazi Germany. But she cannot help having 'mixed feelings' every time she goes 'home' again.

The book is well written and provides an important eyewitness account of how the Nazi government treated Jews during the war, and how the still disputed destruction of Dresden by Allied air bombardment enabled some Jewish families to be spared deportation. It also corroborates other testimonies of how the Red Army failed to recognise Jews as 'victims of fascism' and treated them simply as 'Germans', who had been their enemy.

Fritz Lustig

A book as scholarly as you want it to be

THE QUANTUM EXODUS: JEWISH FUGITIVES, THE ATOMIC BOMB, AND THE HOLOCAUST

by Gordon Fraser

USA: Oxford University Press, 2012, 264 pp. hardcover, ISBN 0199592152

I learned a lot from this very readable book and recommend it to readers of the *AJR Journal* who like to know and understand.

The existence of a bookcase full of Holocaust books leads one to ask the obvious question: why another one? Perfunctory perusal of the table of contents gives an answer. This book describes how the collapse in the 1930s of German learning, and particularly German science, caused a mass exodus of brilliant minds, to the benefit of much of the rest of the world. The author begins by citing the rantings of Philipp Lennard, a scientist and Nobel Laureate who was a Nazi at heart, and goes on to follow

Reviews continued overleaf ➔

Bearing witness: German Order of Merit awarded to Ruth David

At a ceremony at the German Ambassador's residence in London on 13 September, Ruth David (née Oppenheimer) was presented with the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany by Ambassador Georg Boomgaarden. Her children, brother and sister, and many of her friends from the UK, France, the USA and Germany, were present.

The honour is in recognition of Ruth David's work in German schools over the past 15 years. During this time Ruth, the author of *Child of Our Time: A*

Young Girl's Flight from the Holocaust and Life-Lines, has visited numerous schools in Hessen and given talks to pupils, read from her book, and answered questions by young people on that part of German history in which their great-grandparents

played their part.

Ambassador Boomgaarden praised Ruth's 'endless effort and great personal dedication to the education of young people', adding that over the years she 'has built bridges and promoted understanding without trying to forget or talk away the past.'

Congratulatory messages were received from the Mayor of Fränkisch-Crumbach, where Ruth was born, and the Landrat of the Odenwald District.



Ambassador Georg Boomgaarden presents the Order of Merit of the Federal Republic of Germany to Ruth David

Ruth David's parents, who themselves became victims of

the Shoah, had been able to place her on a Kindertransport to England in 1939. Thus Ruth survived and is able to bear witness, which she continues to do with great dedication and humility.

Jurgen Schwiening

Remembering the Kindertransport

On 31 August, marking the 73rd anniversary of the Kindertransport, nine of the original 'Kinder' who later returned to Berlin attended a reception at the British Embassy in Berlin hosted by Deputy Head of Mission Andrew Noble.

Andrew Noble paid special tribute to Sir Ludwig Guttman, who organised the first sporting competition for people with disabilities in Stoke Mandeville in 1948. This competition paved the way for the first Paralympic Games in 1960. Sir Ludwig, Andrew Noble



Six of the nine Berlin 'Kinder' outside the Embassy © Astrid Ladd, British Embassy

said, 'represents the many German Jews who ... like the children of the Kindertransport, went on to achieve great things. We thank them all. We remember those who did not manage to escape, and we vow to act resolutely against anti-Semitism and all forms of persecution in our society.'

REVIEWS cont. from page 9

the illustrious emigrants to success in the promotion of culture everywhere.

The events in Europe between the wars and how they affected Jews in general and Jewish intellectuals in particular are described throughout, so that the book is complete in itself.

There is a list of people involved on nine pages at the end of the book, and those are only the famous ones.

Reading the book does not require more than an intelligent layman's interest in science. The author, who is perfectly qualified for the job – he has a PhD in theoretical physics but has earned his living by his skills in making things clear in writing – is at pains to explain everything needed to follow and comprehend. It is not generally realised that science is such a big subject nowadays that experts in one field are usually laymen in another.

The book is as scholarly as you want it to be, with bibliographies and references throughout, but the individual stories and biographical extracts are a good read. You can follow the effect of the Nazis' ignorance and brutality on each of these individuals and how most of them triumphed by simply doing what they did best in whatever environments were available to them.

The author has chosen the Manhattan

AJR Celebration of Volunteering



(From left) Luciana Berger MP, Alex Glasner, befriender of Ricci Horenstein, third from left, Carol Hart, Head of Volunteer Services

Luciana Berger MP was this year's guest speaker at the AJR's annual Celebration of Volunteering event at the Wiener Library

Project for the building of the atomic bomb as his key topic but it is clear that the subjects of this book have made a major contribution to the whole of modern civilisation, with all its defects and benefits.

Frank Beck

ARTS AND EVENTS OCTOBER DIARY

Tue 2 'The Kindertransport Story' *How We Won the War* (London edition), BBC Two, 6.30 pm

To Wed 3 Exhibition *The Nazi Games: Politics, the Media and the Body*. At Wiener Library, London WC1, tel 020 7636 7247. Admission free

Fri-Sat 12-13 Conference on the *Children of Resistance and Exile (working title)*. At Haus der Demokratie und Menschenrechte in Berlin, held by Union of People Persecuted by the Nazi Regime – Association of Anti-Fascists. Speakers include Marilyn Moos from the UK (on her research on her family and the 'second generation'). Contact Helle Panke e. V. Rosa-Luxemburg-Stiftung, Berlin, on 0049 30 47 53 87 24 or at info@helle-panke.de. Admission free but prior registration advised

Wed 17 Geoff Bowden, 'Murder Most Profitable: The Life and Career of Agatha Christie' B'nai B'rith Jerusalem Lodge, 2.30 pm, venue tbc

Inside the Joint – an invitation

Working for more than 25 years at the Joint (or the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee or JDC), I have observed that almost every story about the humanitarian organisation begins with a family member. For me, that person was my grandfather. A Jewish leader in Nazi-occupied Vienna, he assisted many Jews seeking to emigrate from Austria, especially those trying to reach Palestine. Imagine my surprise when, more than 70 years later, his name and a document relating to his work appeared on my computer screen through the Joint's online Archive. I realised that my grandfather's life was inexorably linked to the work of an organisation that, even today, ensures the survival and well-being of needy Jews around the world.

My grandfather's experience was not unique. For many Jewish refugees, Displaced Persons (DP) and Holocaust survivors, the Joint became a helping hand in the years following the Second World War. When the war ended, more than 53,000 liberated Jews were among the 1.5 million refugees in emergency shelters established by the Allies in Germany, Austria and Italy. Harsh conditions, inadequate food and exposure to disease in these Displaced Persons camps put the survivors at further risk. Jews also found it hard living among often hostile inhabitants, including Nazi collaborators.

The Joint sought to help the 'surviving remnant' in every way possible, but the Allied military blocked outside involvement. Following a stream of letters from Jewish soldiers and military chaplains, as well as protests by Jewish leaders, an inspection of the US-administered camps was performed by President Truman's Special Envoy Earl Harrison in summer 1945. Dr Joseph Schwartz, the Joint's Director of Overseas Operations, accompanied him. Harrison's subsequent report led to significant improvements and separate camps for Jews.

The United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration (UNRRA) and the US Army became the principal provider for survivors in the camps. The Joint and other voluntary agencies like HIAS, ORT and the Jewish Agency of Palestine received permission to contribute supplemental aid or engage in programmes for the survivors.

In 1946 East European Jews, including families with children, began arriving. Those who had escaped to the USSR during the Nazi era faced much anti-Jewish sentiment on returning to their own countries, especially in Poland, where violent attacks were an ominous reality. The underground network Bricha helped move these refugees across Czechoslovakia to the relative safety of the camps; the Joint supplied food, clothing, shelter and transportation.

Meanwhile, a baby boom had begun in the camps. The population in already

'In 1933-1940 the Joint joined the Central British Fund/Council for German Jewry (which would later merge and become the venerable World Jewish Relief (WJR)) and others to cover transportation costs and landing fees for German-Jewish refugees from Europe ... The Joint also helped financially support, in 1938-1940, the Kitchener Camp, a transit camp for German and Austrian Jewish refugees on the English south coast, set up by the Council for German Jewry.'

burdened camps grew to over 250,000 Jews. The Joint's responsibilities expanded still further in July 1947, when the International Refugee Organization (IRO) replaced UNRRA, but with scaled-down resources.

Opportunities for Jewish emigration were limited by the British blockade in Palestine and strict US immigration quotas. The Joint helped whenever legal emigration was possible, representing refugees at consulates, filling out needed papers, booking passage, advancing transportation costs, and furnishing travel supplies. It also funded illegal transport of Jews entering Palestine through the Bricha escape network. With Israel's statehood in 1948, and subsequent easing of US immigration laws, the Joint helped most Jews resettle.

Throughout this difficult period, the Joint provided Jews in the DP camps with the resources to rebuild their lives: supplemental food and clothing, medical treatment, schools, training courses, religious and cultural programmes, loans, mail services, family tracing, and emigration assistance. In response to the special needs of children, the Joint helped all, from infants to adolescents, survive, and even thrive, in an often inhospitable environment.

Of special interest to many readers of this Journal is that in 1933-1940 the Joint joined the Central British Fund/Council for German Jewry (which would later merge and become the venerable World Jewish Relief (WJR)) and others to cover transportation costs and landing fees for German-Jewish refugees from Europe. Additionally, the Joint supported local committees in Europe, which, in addition to other activities, were involved in sending children to England. The Joint also helped financially support, in 1938-1940, the Kitchener Camp, a transit camp for German and Austrian Jewish refugees on the English south coast, set up by the Council for German Jewry.

But so many years later, there are numerous untold stories about our work during that period. That's why we have invited the public to explore tens of thousands of documents, a searchable

database of more than 600,000 names, and thousands of photos from this period to help us fill in the blanks on this very precious part of our shared history.

'I cannot express the profoundly deep connection I felt to my past and now to the Joint when out of nowhere my young face popped up on the screen,' said Claus Hirsch, a German-born Shanghai ghetto survivor who found a photo of himself in the ghetto during his search on the website.

For Claus, and hundreds of thousands of others today, we hope to become a resource for reconnection and family history. And by exploring this vast trove, tagging photos, and sharing your story about the Joint at <http://archives.jdc.org>, we can help benefit generations to come with lessons about collective Jewish responsibility and how one simple act of caring can impact a life forever.

It's also an opportunity to see what the Joint is doing today: in more than 70 countries it's a lifeline to Jews and others in need – the poor, hungry, and victims of natural or man-made disasters. The Joint also ensures that Jewish communities – whether re-emerging after Communism's collapse or small, ancient ones in North Africa and Asia – innovate and grow through JDC programmes, leadership training initiatives, and Jewish educational and cultural activities, including camping, street festivals and holiday caravans.

In Israel, as a historic change-maker since 1914, the Joint creates nationwide solutions for the challenges faced by Israel's most vulnerable citizens through job training and placement, educational advancement and mentoring services, independent-living services and centres, and crisis preparedness, all in partnership with the government of Israel.

In fulfilling our global responsibility, the Joint is proud to partner with and work through WJR in the UK. Together, WJR and the Joint assist Jewish communities living in dire poverty in the former Soviet Union and Europe. Together, we provide homeware, food, winter relief (warm clothing, fuel and firewood) and medical support to the elderly, families with young children, and those living with disabilities. The Joint's partnership with WJR is almost 80 years old and today our combined efforts transform lives and develop long-term programmes that enable poor Jews to break the cycle of poverty.

As you will see by exploring our Archive, the Joint, together with partners like WJR, continues to put into action the principle that all Jews are responsible for one another. As the daughter and granddaughter of Jews who needed to escape from Europe, I can think of nothing more profound.

Linda Levi

Linda Levi is Director of JDC's Global Archives, located in New York City and Jerusalem.

INSIDE the AJR

Sinning at the Home of Earl Grey

Howick Hall in Northumberland, for centuries the home of Earl Grey, now has one of the finest coastal gardens in the country. The guides gave us a taste of the extensive arboretum and woodland walks and took us along stunningly colourful herbaceous borders, terraces and informal gardens. Though the house is not currently open to the public, a truly stately tearoom is and, while some of us partook of lunch on arrival, others sinned later with a cream tea.

Betty Weiner

Ilford King of the Waltz

On our 10th anniversary, one of our members introduced us, via a DVD, to André Rieu, 'King of the Waltz'. A well deserved title for this superb violinist and showman, who entertains large crowds in Vienna with waltzes and quadrilles. A great morning of nostalgic music.

Meta RoseNeil

Ealing Jewish Mother, Nazi Father

Angela Schluter, the daughter of a Jewish mother and a Nazi father, told us about her mother, who survived the war in both Austria and Germany before emigrating to the UK in 1948. An enthralling talk to a large, captivated audience.

Leslie Sommer

Café Imperial In Remembrance of Olympics Past

Team GB AJR discussed previous Olympics. Harold Livingstone recalled going to the Wembley 1948 games and told a funny story about his mother thinking the Salvation Army band was playing – in fact, it was the Grenadier Guards! A marvellous attendance, with two lady guests: Judy Field and Vera Meyer.

Esther Rinkoff

St John's Wood Jewish Opera Singers and Musicians

Alan Bilgora told us that Jewish musicians are better known than Jewish opera singers. Several of the latter began their careers as *chazanim*. They sang in great opera houses in Russia, America and all over Europe but some did not survive the Holocaust.

David Lang

HGS Changing the Image

El Al – Every Landing Always Late. This is the image El Al Marketing Director Zoe Bermant is trying to change! Nonetheless, El Al is the most favoured airline to travel with if you're going to Israel – easyJet doesn't come anywhere near for service or security.

Esther Rinkoff

Essex (Westcliff) A Fascinating Story

Guest speaker Angela Schluter told us about her mother and her upbringing. A fascinating story. We had a very good turnout of members and guests.

Linda Fisher

Welwyn GC Chatting and Reminiscing

We chatted, reminisced and enjoyed Monica's hospitality. Conversation ranged from our earliest memories – some very moving, others very funny – to the founding of AJR group meetings and forthcoming events. Once again, a very lively meeting.

Marianne Linford

Radlett Poetry Reading

The meeting was a delight. Shirley Jaffe read some of her poems, nearly all of them inspired by members of or events within her family. Many were humorous, some quite moving, a number both. Surprisingly, only a few of the poems have been published.

Fritz Starer

Cambridge Gratitude Owed to Wiener Library

The history and extensive development of the Wiener Library, now in Russell Square, were most interestingly explained by Toby Simpson. Future generations will be grateful for the Library's diligence in collecting such important data.

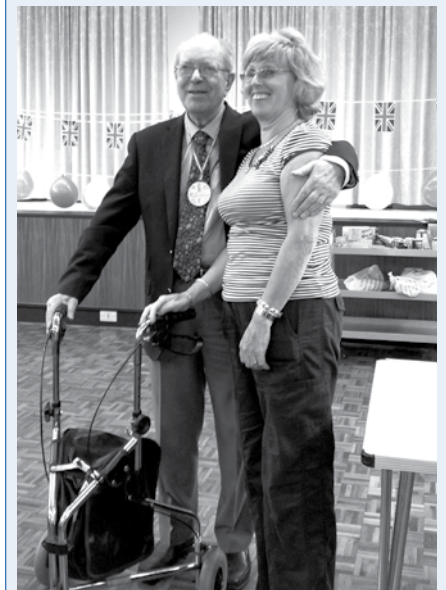
Keith Lawson

Brighton and Hove Sarid

Use of the Alexander Technique

Alexander Technique teacher Claudia Weiss explained the use of the Technique in relieving pain and stress, drawing attention to the benefits gained by

LONDON 2012 AJR LYMPICS



Henry Grant was awarded a Gold Medal by AJR Social Worker Ruth Finestone

Getting into the spirit of the Olympics and the Paralympics, the AJR Paul Balint Centre held its own Ajrlympics. Individual medals were competed for in Throw the Hoop, Bean Bag in the Ladle, Skittles and Bag in the Net. Team sports included Pass the Ball. Competitors were cheered on by the crowds in the Ajrlympic AJR Centre hall, medals were awarded to the winners, and fun was had by everyone.

sufferers of back and neck pains, especially in advanced age.

Ceska Abrahams

Hendon A Story Like No Other

David Lawson told us the story of Eva Erben, a Holocaust survivor story like no other we had heard. One of the grandchildren and David's delivery left us all deep in thought.

Hazel Beiny

Edgware Life Story of Chazan Jason Blair

Our scheduled speaker from El Al didn't arrive so Hazel Beiny stood in with a current affairs discussion. Then, at short notice, Jason Blair, the *chazan* from Edgware Masorti Synagogue, entertained us with his life story.

Joan Kalb

Weald of Kent 'Escape Story'

David Lawson told a well-attended meeting about 'Escape Story', the autobiography of Czech-born Eva Erben. Eva is now at peace as a grandmother in Israel.

Inge Ball

Surrey Spirits Not Dampened by Thunderstorm

Enjoying once again the hospitality of Edmee Barta, the Group had a successful meeting. The thunderstorm didn't dampen the spirits and lively conversation or spoil the appetites of many of the participants for the delicious brunch. As usual, members were updated on AJR events.

Myrna Glass

Harrogate/York From Stoke Mandeville Games to Paralympics



Marc and Rosl Schatzberger with Arek Hersh and Otto Greenfield. Otto and Arek were 'Boys' who had first met in the Lake District soon after the war before meeting last year in York at the Schatzbergers

We talked about a recent TV play featuring the work of Dr Ludwig Guttman at Stoke Mandeville Hospital. This led to the national Stoke Mandeville Games, which developed into today's Paralympics. We acknowledged our gratitude to Britain for giving us refuge as well as our contribution to Britain in many fields.

Marc Schatzberger

OCTOBER GROUP MEETINGS

Pinner	4 Oct	Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg, 'From Finchley to Frankfur'
Didsbury	10 Oct	At Bridge Club
Glasgow CF	10 Oct	Get-together
St John's Wood	10 Oct	Marilyn Greene, 'Jewish Art at the V&A Museum'
Edinburgh CF	11 Oct	Get-together
Welwyn GC	11 Oct	Joyce Sheard of WheelPower
Brighton-Sarid (Sussex)	15 Oct	Alf Keiles, 'The Jewish Contribution to Jazz'
Edgware	16 Oct	Chris Carr, Hearing Aid Specialist
Oxford	16 Oct	Robin Richardson, Separated Child Foundation
Radlett	17 Oct	Alf Keiles, a talk by one of our regular members
Cambridge	18 Oct	Helen Fry, 'Inside Nuremberg Prison'
Cardiff	22 Oct	Lunchtime Social Get-together
Kent	23 Oct	Lunch and Social Get-together; speaker John Izbicki
Prestwich/Whitefield	23 Oct	At home of Ruth and Werner Lachs
Wembley	24 Oct	Social Get-together
Glasgow Book Club	25 Oct	Meeting
North London	25 Oct	Evelyn Friedlander, 'Jews in Germany in the 21st Century'
Sheffield	28 Oct	Screening of <i>Watermarks</i>
Broughton Park/Crumpsall	29 Oct	In conservatory at Gan Eden
Hendon	29 Oct	Ambassador from El Al Marketing
Temple Fortune	30 Oct	Representative from Essentially Medical
Book Club	31 Oct	Social and Discussion
Harrogate/York	31 Oct	At home of Inge and Ken Little

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KT-AJR (Kindertransport)
Andrea Goodmaker 020 8385 3070

Child Survivors Association-AJR
Henri Obstfeld 020 8954 5298

'Ragtime' – A Wonderful Treat

It was hard to know what to expect when we entered the auditorium of Regent's Park Open Air Theatre and saw a rather dusty stage set. But we were in for a wonderful treat and the audience followed with eyes and ears glued.

There was everything one could hope for, with music, dancing, escapism, and clever and professional acting – not to mention a moving, historical and thought-provoking plot.

Every actor was good and every voice

clear on a stage transformed with great vibrancy to the USA of 100 years ago.

The plot followed the tragic struggles and victimisation of African-Americans displaying a fierce determination for justice. Their baby is rescued by a white upper-class family with a heroic lady of the house and disapproving polar explorer husband. Then there are Jewish immigrants – who, needless, to say, make good – as a new future dawn. A marvellous afternoon. *Janet Weston*

Vera's Birthday



Volunteer Vera Gellman (right) with Pinner Group member Marion Marston, who was present as midwife at Vera's birth. Vera has been running the Pinner Group since its inception in December 1997.

Wembley

'Father of the Paralympics'

Besides lively conversations, with members meeting for the first time or after a break, recent outings to the Wiener Library and Regent's Park Theatre were discussed. Also, the TV programme about 'Father of the Paralympics' Ludwig Guttmann, seen by a number of members, was highly praised.

Myrna Glass

Marlow

CF Lunch and Animated Discussion

At the home of Alan Kaye, we had a brilliant time enjoying the lunch prepared by Hazel Beiny and an animated discussion on topical issues. If anyone in the Marlow catchment area is interested in joining us, please get in touch with Hazel.

Alex Lawrence

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and Tuesday 9 October. Open Wednesday
3 October and Wednesday 10 October

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Thursday 18 October 2012

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OCTOBER ACTIVITIES

Tue	2	CLOSED – 2ND DAY SUKKOT
Wed	3	OPEN
		Exercises with Jackie
Thur	4	Exercises with Rosalie
Tue	9	CLOSED – SIMCHAT TORAH
Wed	10	OPEN
		Exercises with Jackie
Thur	11	Book Club & French Conversation
		Exercises with Rosalie
Tue	16	Exercises with Jackie
Thur	18	Exercises with Rosalie
Tue	23	Coffee and Board Games
Thur	25	Book Club & French Conversation
		Exercises with Rosalie
Tue	30	Coffee and Board Games

All activities begin at 10.30 am. Admission is £7
to include lunch from 12.30 pm, or £2 for activity
alone. There is a nominal charge of £3 for a carer
accompanying a member for the day, including lunch.

OCTOBER ENTERTAINMENT

Tue	2	CLOSED 2ND DAY SUKKOT
Wed	3	OPEN
		– Evelyn True and Glen Pitter
Thur	4	Margaret Opdahl
Tue	9	CLOSED – SIMCHAT TORAH
Wed	10	OPEN – Games Afternoon
Thur	11	Roy Blass
Tue	16	Ronnie Goldberg
Thur	18	LUNCHEON CLUB
Tue	23	Douglas Poster
Thur	25	Ronnie Goldberg
Tue	30	Lynda Styan

Oxford A Much Appreciated Event

We shared in a wonderful lunch in Susi
Bates's conservatory in Abingdon. This
has become a much appreciated August
event – thank you Susi.

John Fieldsend

continued on page 16 ➔

FAMILY ANNOUNCEMENTS

Death

Alweiss, Manfred With sadness we announce his passing at the age of 87 on 22 August 2012 after a long illness borne courageously. He will be dearly missed by his wife Yvonne, his daughters Rivka and Lilian and their spouses Arik and Noam, and his eight grandchildren and two step-grandchildren.

CLASSIFIED

AJR Paul Balint Centre

Chiropodist will be at the Centre on **Tuesday 23 October, 9.30 am to 12 noon**

Second Generation Network

Tue 16 October Film Night: The Wave

Tue 6 November Talk by Martin Davidson: 'Being Second Generation: The Grandson of an SS Officer Gives His Perspective'

Tue 13 November Discussion Group: Topic tbc

All events at the Wiener Library, 29 Russell Square, London WC1, 6.30 for 6.45 pm. Tel 020 7636 7247 or email info@secondgeneration.org.uk. All Second Generation welcome.

75th Anniversary of the Kindertransport Special Reunion

Sunday 23 June 2013 at JFS, North West London

Calling all Kinder! The AJR Kindertransport Committee is delighted to announce a Special Reunion to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the Kindertransport, which will take place on Sunday 23 June 2013 at JFS in North West London.

The Reunion, which will include contributions from Kinder, JFS pupils and guest speakers, will be a unique opportunity for Kinder and their families to reconnect and socialise and pay tribute to the British Government for offering them a safe haven.

In the coming months, we will be publishing further details about the Reunion, and other special events which we will be organising to mark the 75th anniversary, in the *AJR Journal*, the *KT Newsletter* and on the AJR website.

OUTING TO THE BANK OF ENGLAND

THURSDAY 22 NOVEMBER 2012

Threadneedle Street, London EC2R 8AH

Tour of the Bank of England Museum



Our outing will consist of a visit to the Bank of England Museum, which tells the story of the Bank from its foundation in 1694 to its role today as the United Kingdom's central bank. The historical displays include material drawn from the Bank's own collections of books, documents, silver, prints, paintings, banknotes, coins and photographs. There is a display of gold, including Roman and modern gold bars, alongside pikes and muskets once used to defend the Bank. Computer technology and audio-visual

displays explain the Bank's present-day role. After the Tour of the Museum, Tim Pike, Agent for the Bank of England in Southern England, will talk to our group and answer any questions.

We will finish the afternoon with tea at a nearby hotel. Cost: £25.00 pp to include transport by coach.

For further details, please contact Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or at susan@ajr.org.uk

PLEASE JOIN US FOR A SPECIAL EVENT TO CELEBRATE THE LONDON OLYMPICS AND PARALYMPIC GAMES

MONDAY 3 DECEMBER 2012

11 am to 3 pm



AT STOKE MANDEVILLE – THE BIRTH PLACE OF THE PARALYMPICS

The day will include a tour of the hospital and a talk by Wheelpower, the registered charity of the Paralympics.

Transport will be available to all members. Refreshments and lunch will be provided.

For full details and an application form, please contact Susan Harrod on 020 8385 3070 or at susan@ajr.org.uk

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A remarkable legacy: Seminar on the contribution of Jewish refugees from Hitler to life in Britain

A seminar entitled 'German and Austrian Jewish Refugees: Their Impact and Legacy' took place on 12-13 September 2012 at the London Jewish Cultural Centre (LJCC). It was held jointly by the LJCC, the University of Sussex's Centre for German-Jewish Studies, and the AJR.

The purpose of the seminar was, pending the 80th anniversary of Hitler's rise to power, to reflect on the lives of the German and Austrian Jewish refugees who had fled Nazism and to consider their remarkable contribution to life in Britain.

This highly successful, well-attended event began with a wide-ranging lecture by Dr Anthony Grenville, Consultant Editor of the *AJR Journal*, on the culture of Viennese Jewry before 1938. He was followed by Professor Edward Timms, founder of the German-Jewish Studies Centre, who explored the fascinating subject 'Sigmund Freud and the Creative Circles of Vienna'.

In the afternoon, the LJCC's Executive Director of Education and Holocaust Studies, Trudy Gold, gave an overview of

Germany during the period 1919-1939. The day ended with a panel discussion by AJR 'first generation' members Edith Argy (born Vienna), Dr Edgar Feuchtwanger (born Munich) and Dorli Neale (born Innsbruck). The session, chaired by Rabbi Rodney Marriner, Emeritus Rabbi of Belsize Square Synagogue, gave the entranced audience a memorable insight into the refugee experience.

The second day of the seminar began with an especially topical lecture by Claudia Zimmerman (Sociology Department, Karl Franzens University, Graz) on the legacy of Ludwig 'Poppa' Guttman, founder of what was to become the Paralympics. Patrick Bade, a senior tutor at Christie's Education Department, played musical extracts and regaled the audience with anecdotes on some of the many musicians, including Hans Gal, Berthold Goldschmidt and Richard Tauber, who had brought a greater professionalism to musical life in Britain.

In a subsequent session, Rabbi Jonathan Wittenberg of the New North London

Synagogue, in conversation with Dr Gideon Reuveni, Director of the German-Jewish Studies Centre, discussed the importance of 'Bildung' in pre-war German-Jewish life and declared his full support for multiculturalism in the UK.

In the final session, a panel discussion chaired by AJR Chief Executive Michael Newman and devoted to the 'second generation', Kit Plaschkes, daughter of Vienna Kindertransport refugee Otto Plaschkes, Allen Morgenthau, child of refugees from Nazi Germany, and Maya Jacobs, daughter of the Breslau-born cellist Anita Lasker Wallfisch, spoke emotionally of their sense of being different from other children, the feelings of guilt they had inherited from their parents and the difficulties of coming to terms with their past. Members of the audience contributed significantly to this sombre session, with the point being stressed that the experience of Holocaust survivors did not necessarily equate with that of refugees from Nazi occupation.



Among the many Jewish refugees from Germany and Austria who have made an enormous contribution to life in the UK are (from left) Sir Ludwig Guttman, founder of what was to become the Paralympics, tenor Richard Tauber, Lord (Claus) Moser

LETTERS *cont. from p.7*

need excuses, Eric! If you enjoy Berlin, why not live there too? My infrequent visits to Vienna are enjoyable but Vienna (and Austria) are certainly not my 'Heimat'. Vienna happens to be my 'place of birth' on my passport – and that's all.

Eric Bourne writes about 'life enrichment'. Mine has been enriched by the very fact that I live in England. What a pity he doesn't feel the same and, consequently, has to keep visiting Berlin – his 'Heimat' – to attain that fulfilment.

Peter Phillips, Loudwater, Herts

MUNCH 'SICK CHILD'

Sir – There is a small error in Gloria Tessler's review (September) of the Munch exhibition at the Tate Modern. Writing about *The Sick Child*, she describes the grieving woman as the mother of the child. The child was Munch's beloved

sister Sophie, who had died, aged 15, in 1877. Their mother had died in 1868 and the children were looked after by their aunt Karen, who is the grieving woman by the bedside.

Ralph Blumenau, London W11

PLUS THREE DAYS

Sir – Concerning the article by Clemens Nathan ('AJR Representatives at Buckingham Palace for Diamond Jubilee Celebrations') in a recent issue of the Journal, wishing someone to live to 120 is now obsolete. The wish now is to live to 120 plus 3 days. Who wants to die on their birthday? *Rudi Leavor, Bradford*

SHABBAT SERVICE ON DEMAND

Sir – The following may amuse some of your readers. On a recent cruise around

the Baltic area, I was surprised, to say the least, when a number of fellow passengers told me they wished to hold a Friday night Shabbat service. The 'leaders' of this rapidly growing group – a couple from Leeds – thereupon approached the ship's captain with a request for a bottle of wine. He replied that none was available as there was no precedent for such a service. When, however, the Leeds couple insisted – there were 30 of us by now! – he relented and handed over a dozen bottles of kosher Manischewitz wine!

Lo and behold, on completion of the service, there wasn't a bottle to be seen anywhere

*Ernie Goldmann,
Stanmore, Middx*

Ernie Goldmann is a former Accountant at the AJR (Ed.)



LETTER FROM ISRAEL

Dorothea Shefer-Vanson



Anti-Semitism in another guise

When Israel's leading theatrical company, Habima, was invited to perform Shakespeare's *The Merchant of Venice* in Hebrew at the Globe Theatre in London last summer, a flurry of opposing voices erupted. The usual vociferous pro-Palestinian and anti-Israel suspects trotted out their tried-and-tested arguments denigrating Israel's government. It seemed perfectly logical for them to call for the cancellation, or at least boycott, of a performance by Israeli actors. They threatened to demonstrate against the performance and disrupt it if it went ahead.

To their credit, the organisers of the festival, who had invited theatrical companies from all over the world to perform in London, did not heed the threats, merely putting precautionary measures in place (extra security and additional ushers). The protesters demonstrated outside the theatre, as was their right, and were confronted by a counter-demonstration by Israel's supporters. The show went on, and by all accounts was a great success, and those who tried to disturb the performance were quickly removed from the auditorium.

But, as has been pointed out before,

the campaign against Habima was just one aspect of the ongoing endeavour by various groups in England and elsewhere to delegitimise Israel and deny its right to exist. This campaign has now been extended to the sphere of artistic endeavour, so that any Israeli artist who seeks to appear on a stage in England does so at the risk of having his or her performance interrupted by calls to 'Free Palestine' and for Israel to cease practising 'apartheid'. The facts on the ground – namely that Israel seeks peace and defensible borders – are of no relevance to these people, led by the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement, who seem to be motivated by little less than blind hatred of Israel and all it stands for.

Perhaps it's time to remind ourselves that Israel was founded on the basis of the legitimate right of the Jewish people to a homeland, as set out by the British government in the Balfour Declaration of 1917. The UN Partition Resolution of 1947 was rejected by the Arabs, who took up arms to prevent its implementation. The outcome of the ensuing war, Israel's War of Independence, was that Israel was established and Jordan, Egypt and Syria

appropriated the areas that had been designated for the Palestinian state. The Palestinians have recently adopted the term *Naqba* for that event (something like *Tisha b'Av*, which commemorates the destruction of the Temple and the Romans' expulsion of the Jews from their land in 70 CE).

Israel has stated that it is prepared to cede land in return for peace and acceptance of its existence as a Jewish state. No such undertaking has been forthcoming from the Palestinians. Moreover, a few years ago Israel pulled out of the Gaza Strip and uprooted its settlers hoping for peace with the Palestinians there. The result? Almost daily rocket bombardments of civilian areas from close range. Would anyone in their right mind take that risk again?

It is also worth recalling that in the Six Day War of 1967 Israel fended off three invading Arab armies and conquered the areas that its Arab neighbours had taken over in 1948. Since the Arab countries refused to recognise Israel's existence or negotiate peace terms, the areas thus acquired became 'occupied'. Opinions within Israel and outside it are divided as to the legitimacy and/or advisability of Israel's remaining in those areas, and certainly as to its right to build and settle there, but, until a viable partner for peace negotiations comes along, the situation remains fluid and certain elements within Israel take advantage of this.

But logic has no meaning when anti-Zionism is simply anti-Semitism in another guise.

INSIDE THE AJR *continued from page 13*

Temple Fortune 'Tudor England and the Jewish Experience'

Peter Sampson gave a fascinating talk based on his personal research. Officially, there were no Jews in England between the Expulsion in 1290 and the Readmission in 1655. However, Peter opened our eyes to the reality, which was quite different, including secret synagogues and Jewish musicians at the court of Henry VIII.

David Lang

Bath/Bristol Early Work of Joseph Herman

Simon Baker spoke about Polish émigré artist Joseph Herman's early work and provided illustrations for us to keep.

The work was from Herman's formative years, 1938-44, as he passed through Warsaw, Brussels, Glasgow and London, and reflect his search for a means of expressing the trauma of his personal experience.

Hazel Rank-Broadley

Book Club Our Latest Read

Views on our latest read, Alison Light's *Mrs Woolf and the Servants*, were positive as regards the book's contribution to domestic service during the lifetime of Virginia Woolf and the light it throws on her psychological state, but less enthusiastic as regards its literary value.

Gabriele Weil

North London 11th Anniversary Celebration

We celebrated our 11th birthday with a most pleasant light lunch and with musical entertainment provided by Jane Rosenberg. A special thank you to Myrna and her helpers. If only celebrations of this kind came around more often.

Herbert Haberberg

Edinburgh CF Delightful Outing

We had a delightful outing to the Royal Overseas League. We shared our light lunch with the sound of bagpipes filtering through in the background, followed by a superb classical piano concert by James Sherlock. A most pleasant afternoon.

Agnes Isaacs